

M.O.M.

MICHIGAN OPPOSING MANDATORY VACCINES
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September 16, 2009

TO: Members of the Senate Committee on Health Policy

RE: Testimony offered for Senate Bill No. 722

On behalf of the members of Michigan Opposing Mandatory Vaccines (M.O.M.), I am taking a neutral position on Senate Bill No. 722. However, we do have some concerns we would like to express.

Briefly, M.O.M. was formed in late 1994 to preserve a parent's right to decline the use of vaccines as a method of health care for themselves and their children. M.O.M. is not "anti-vaccine". We believe parents have the ultimate right and responsibility to make vaccine choices for their children. Most of our directors are health care professionals. M.O.M.'s membership is composed both of individuals who choose to have themselves and their children vaccinated and those who do not.

As stated in this bill, M.O.M. agrees that a hospital should have a plan to manage its supply of flu vaccine just as it manages the supply of any of its pharmaceuticals.

We are concerned with the manner influenza vaccine will be offered to the person (patient) of 65 years of age or older. The offer of the vaccine should be made in the spirit of an offer, without pressuring or badgering the patient.

The patient needs to be given accurate, factual information about influenza and the effectiveness of the vaccine:

- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the flu vaccine manufactured for the 2007-08 influenza season was reported to have an overall effectiveness 44%, with 58% effectiveness against the predominant influenza A (H3N2) viruses, but no effectiveness against the influenza B.
- It is widely promoted that 36,000 die every year from the flu. However, the number of deaths from influenza was 849 in 2006, 1,806 in 2005, and 1,100 in 2004.
- It may also be of concern to some patients that the influenza vaccine does contain thimerosal.

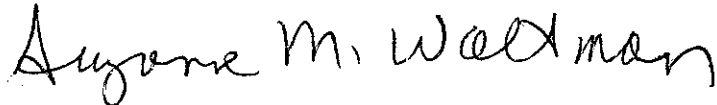
Another concern we share, as stated in a legislative analysis for this bill's 2005 predecessor, increased administrative costs, paperwork burdens and other compliance costs will be added to already overburdened hospital staffs.

Finally, we ask if this legislation is absolutely necessary when flu vaccines are offered at grocery stores, drug stores, county health departments, senior health fairs and churches. Flu vaccines are easily accessible to the public and reasonably priced.

We do appreciate the inclusion of a system that would track post-vaccination adverse events.

Thank you for taking our testimony. M.O.M. appreciates this opportunity to share our views on SB No. 722.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne M. Waltman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suzanne M. Waltman
President, Michigan Opposing Mandatory Vaccines